(c) if so, by when; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) The weighted average cost of production -of Maize for 2002-03 has been estimated at Rs. 329.34 per quintal and Rs. 421.39 per quintal for Khagaria and Bhagalpur districts respectively. As against this, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) of Maize crop for 2002-03 was Rs. 485.00 per quintal (excluding Rs. 5.00 per quintal announced as special drought relief price). Thus MSP was higher than the cost production in both the districts. The prevailing market prices of maize in Bihar are ruling above MSP of Rs. 525.00 per quintal announced for the Kharif crop of 2004-05 season.

(b) to (d) Government does not propose to set up maize processing industry in those areas. However, Central Government in the Ministry of Food Processing Industries provide financial assistance in the form of Grant-in-Aid @ 25% and 33.33% of the project cost subject to maximum of Rs. 50.00 lakhs and Rs. 75.00 lakhs in general areas and difficult areas respectively to all implementing agencies to set up food processing units.

Task Force tor Kural Cooperative Credit Structure

3883. SHRI S.P.M. SYED KHAN: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have set up any Task Force to study the existing rural cooperative credit system of the country;

(b) if so, whether the Task Force has made its recommendations; «
(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) if not, whether any time frame has been fixed for giving its recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LAL BHURIA): (a) to (c) Details are given in the statement. *(See* below)

(d) Does not arise.

Statement

Task Force for Rural Cooperative Credit Structure.

In August 2004, the Government of India constituted a Task Force under the Chairmanship of Prof. A. Vaidyanathan to suggest measures for revival of rural cooperative credit institutions. The Task Force has submitted its Report on 15th Feburary, 2005.

2. The main recommendations made by the Task Force are:

- Financial package of Rs. 14,839 crore has been recommended for strengthening of the cooperative credit institutions. The package covers accumulated losses, unpaid invoked guarantees, receivable from State Governments, return of share capital to State Governments, Human Resources Development, conduct of special audits, computerization, implementation costs etc. The likely share of the Centre, State Government and the cooperatives in the assistance has been estimated at 53%, 31% and 16% respectively.

- Provision of financial assistance is linked to reforms in cooperative sector.

- Institutional resturcturing to make way for democratic, member driven, autonomous and self-reliant institutions.

- Redical changes in the legal framework to empower Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to regulate Cooperative Credit Structures.

- Qualitative improvement in personnel in all tiers and at all levels.

- State Governments need to make legislative amendments to enable RBI to exercise its regulatory powers under the Banking Regulation Act. The Task Force has suggested the working draft of a Model Cooperative Law.

- The State Governments should formally agree to participate in the revival package. The scheme be kept open for a period of two years for the State Governments to decide on the participation and may be closed for such purposes on 31st March, 2008. Release of funds

should be linked to the progress by the State Government in actually implementing the revival package.

- Since legislative amendments may take time, the State Governments should, in the meanwhile, enter into an appropriate MOU with the RBI, agreeing to desist from interfering directly or indirectly in the financial management of these banks.

- All cooperative banks should be brought on par with the commercial banks as far as regulatory norms are concerned.

The Governemnt in principal has accepted the recommendations of the Task Force.

Suicide by farmers

†3884. SHRIDILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 1866 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 18th March, 2005 and state:

(a) whether the special economic help, for the people of this class, announced by Hon'ble Prime Minister in the month of June-July, 2004, is only for the farmers of Andha Pradesh or for the farmers of all the States; and

(b) if it is only for the farmers of Andhra Pradesh, the reasons for this discrimination?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI KANTI LALBHURIA): (a) The Hon'ble Prime Minister visited Andhra Pradesh on 1 st July, 2004 and directed, among other things, that livelihood cover should be provided to one person from each of the suicide affected families, through collaborative action between the Government and Banks. He also announced an assistance of Rs. 50,000 from the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF) to the families of persons who committed suicide.

(b) Information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House.

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.